

432nd Bomb. Sqdn.
17th Bomb. Gp.
A.P.O. 520, % Postmaster N.Y.C.
July 3, 1943

Hello Folks,-

July, eh,- well - another month gone by the wayside from the calendar! - So what? - One day is the same as the other over here - and certainly one month is the same cause if the days make no impression - how then the months? And if you know what I'm talking about, you're better than I am 'cause I don't. - Just rambling along wondering what's coming next, the same as you.

See, I had a field day, day before yesterday. - We had the day off, so 3 of us decided to go swimming in the Mediterranean! - We had no transportation - but didn't let that stand in our way - we just got out along the highway and thumbed - just like in ye olde U.S.! After several hours & various rides, we got to the beach. Quite a nice place with a town right there. - We spent about 3 hrs there and then bummed back here -! - We just had a swell time doing a lot of nonsense. We just did any ol' thing that came to our mind - just like kids on a picnic. - Along the way we would stop at these little native stands where they have learned to have their conception of our knowledge. It tastes awfully queer - and probably would not be sanctioned to drink - but it's cold, - and wet - so that's about all we ask! - Also along the way we bought some fresh fruit - the first we've seen. - These natives as usual asked sky high prices - but we were suckers enough! Money just gets to mean nothing - as money itself. - Anyway, we

2/ got back to camp - completely satisfied and having had quite the best time since I arrived in Africa!

The sea was awfully salt - I'd forgotten how salty real sea water was - but it didn't take but one plunge + swallow to remember! - The beach had a fairly good slope to it, but there was no surf - a lot of seaweed off shore broke it up I guess, besides being a calm day. One of these days I'm either going to learn to swim real well or give up the attempt altogether.

I started to tell you about some peaches we bought on the way home. - We saw some right near where we went swimming - so --- we got some. They sell them by the kilograms (2.2 lbs.). - We bought 8 kilos for 200 francs - translated means we paid \$4.00 for 8.8 lbs! - As if that wasn't bad enough - they got so bruised bouncing on the way home - we only got to eat the few we did on the way. - We got back to camp about dark - and the next morning ~~the~~ hot had set in, so we had to throw the whole lot + kaboodle away! - So figure it out - I paid about \$.35 for two or 3 peaches! - Who says living is cheap in Africa and that the natives don't take advantage of the Americans?

John Freeman just breezed thru here. - He said he had seen about 10 or 12 letters for me since I left B.T.C. - But of course I haven't gotten them yet. I know I have mail in Africa - but I've gotten to the stage of wanting to see some! John hasn't stopped back by here this afternoon - so I guess he has been assigned to some other organization. - He's been together for so long

3] I hate not being together - but tis the Army I guess!

I haven't been out ~~afraid~~ "a feuding" as we call it, for some time now. I'm just as happy! I don't skink it at all when my name's on the list, - but I don't go around complaining when they leave my name off, either! I don't really expect a chance to get back home until all is over, anyhow, - so I'd just as soon not wish things too much, if you know what I mean! -

Boy, - the heat is terrific - It has gotten so it doesn't even cool off much at night now. - In the day - well, - the heat must be well over 100° in the shade. You can't get cool even with all your clothes off - as we go around mostly - that is - with the exception of shorts. - Everyone is as brown as can be. - I think we can all run around outside all day long without fear of burning more - even me! When we're flying, - it's even better. - The sun coming thru the glass in the cock-pit is concentrated - and do we sweat! - I've been living on salt tablets for a week or so now. I've suffered salt deficiency before - and I don't care to repeat it! - I wonder what this place will be like in another month and it really gets hot? - Hope we move further north by then! -

So tomorrow is the glorious 4th! - But we don't have a holiday - and det. too. - I make some bigger "bargs" than I ever have before on any fourth. - Why if need be - I'll take my ol' .45 out and shoot it off!

Been suffering with what is locally known as "the African Crud" - That's the more polite name. It's a case of stomach cramps + diarrhea! - Think nothing of it! - Think each man has it about once in every 10 days! - at least.

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I went over to the Doc this morning to get some Paragoric, but he had none. - Instead he gave me some Sulfaguanidine tablets to take for a couple of days. - It seems it takes awhile for it to work but what it does - as he explained it - is to kill whatever the infection is that's causing the trouble in the intestinal track! - Anyway - it's 4 big tablets every 4 hrs. and it takes most a quart of water to do it! Some sulfa-drugs we can't take and still fly - but he said that this stuff acts locally and won't bother me in the least. - of course I had some of Ma's blackberry ginger - but that's not good for the stomach ache, - is it? - Anyway the Doc's here and might as well make him do something to earn his salary!

Say - you know what -? - No one but Ma will be interested. I haven't had to take any laxative or oil since on the way to Africa! The only other time that ever happened to me since I can remember were the 2 weeks we spent in Kanston! That, being out of reach of laxatives + stuff, was one of the worst headaches I had for foreign service. - It's not the psychological factor of not being able to get them cause I got a small supply on hand that I've never even opened! - Guess there has to be some compensation for Africa, doesn't it? - At first I was afraid to bag - but ~~the~~ now I think it perfectly safe!

And by the way - I understand there's some new ruling out now where you don't need your C.O. permission to ~~get~~ ^{send} packages overseas - up to five pounds, I think. - I was wondering the other day what kind of cake you could send me that would stand shipping this far? - Ahem. - I'll pass the problem on to you. - If you reach a favorable decision, and can get the necessary ingredients - it sure would be well received! Set my banker and go buy the stuff needed. - If I pay such

5] a price for a few measly peaches - how much do you think I'd pay for a piece of home made cake from my home?

Thursday - July 8, 1943

If the flies will desert a few minutes I'll try to finish this and get it in the mail to you.

A quiet 4th was spent and I didn't even get the chance to fire my automatic! - The Group had a sort of picnic I mentioned in a V mail - and that was all.

The weather hasn't relent a bit. - One of the fellows has a thermometer that was registering 124 in the shade the other day! The wind was blowing the heat right off the Sahara - and it was so hot you couldn't stand it. - It reminded me of that Sunday down on G St. when Mr. Clarence came to see us - remember it was hotter riding than staying home? - Well, it was even hotter here! - You should have seen some of the queer sights. Our candles melted down to a puddle of wax, leaving the string out all by itself - and I had a can of saddle soap with a cloth on top of it, like you put away in a can of simonize - and today I find the cloth has been resting on the bottom, the soap having melted and allowed it to settle! - One of the fellows - Fitzpatrick - had a bottle of regular Vaseline he brought in to show me. - It was melted and looked like thin oil in the jar! - All of this stuff is inside our tents too - in the shade! Whenever we are forced to sit around - we strip and keep a saturated towel thrown across our shoulders - you'd be surprised how much it helps.

I believe I mentioned Capt. Hahn saying he sent my name into the press release, didn't I? He's a crazy ol' coot and lots of fun. - His home is in Philadelphia. He used to run a brokerage for life insurance or something - and he's a typical one. - He has almost as many "connections" around as Joe!

Oh - good news. - I got 2 letters day before yesterday! One from Sister - written piecemeal and finally dated on the 3rd of June, I think! - Susan more will catch up to me

6) pretty soon now. - I was glad to hear you have a new roomer and think you will enjoy her. - Hope she proves to be what you want. - Her working for the Red Cross reminds me that each time we land after a mission - the Red Cross has a box of doughnuts + some coffee waiting for us. You've no idea how it's enjoyed either. -

(by separate cover)
I'm sending an article that appeared in the "Stars + Stripes", a newspaper published for the Armed Forces in Africa. - It has one of our planes written up as to its exploits. - It is colored a lot - as newspapers will do - but it's from our Group so I thought it might interest you.

What do you think of sending my camera? - I've been playing with the idea but can't reach a conclusion. - Sometimes I'd like to have it, and at others I'm glad I haven't. - We can't get films over here, or films processed. - tho I might be able to develop the films - but make no prints in the photo section. -

Oh, yes - Thanks for the air mail stamps, Sister. - They are hard to get over here - in fact impossible from here. - And speaking of stamps - maybe I'd better stop before I get a letter returned for insufficient postage, as someone I know did. ahem!

I managed to get hold of a few sheets of V mail. - as you know by now. - but I'd still like some if you can send me some. It's just luck if you happen to get it over here. I tried something new the other day. - I heard the quickest way for us to send V mail was to stamp it with an Air Mail stamp - then it would go air mail all the way. - It only works from this end, however - if it works at all - did it?

Well. - I'm going to close now - and you can surely believe me when I say, I'm all writ out. - Bye now - and lots of Love.

Loog,
Frank